

Claim Amendments:

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

--1-39. (cancelled)

40. (currently amended) A high specimen yield anti-reflux head for a needle aspiration biopsy device, comprising: a specimen collection well with a floor at its bottom and a sample passageway defined by at least one of an internal passage and a needle having a shaft extending along a long axis concentric with the collection well, the sample passageway communicating with the collection well through an internal opening in spaced relation to the floor such that a specimen can pass through the sample passageway and be deposited in the collection well from above the floor with collected specimens being spaced from the internal opening, wherein the sample passageway is defined by a first segment extending from the internal opening at an angle to the long axis, a second segment extending continuously from the first segment, a portion of which is concentric about an axis spaced from the long axis, and a third segment extending continuously from the second segment to be concentric with the long axis without passing through the collection well floor.

41. (previously presented) The device of claim 40, wherein the needle defines the entire sample passageway extending from the pointed tip to a contoured proximal end.

42. (currently amended) The device of claim 41, wherein the proximal end of the needle ~~includes a segment that extends along and opens about a lateral axis at an angle to a longitudinal axis of the needle~~ defines the segments of the sample passageway.

43. (previously amended) The device of claim 40, wherein the sample passageway is defined by a combination of the needle and the internal passage.

44. (currently amended) The device of claim 43, wherein the needle has a straight proximal end disposed at an opening in the hub ~~defining an end of the internal passage defined by the third segment.~~

45-46. (cancelled)

47. (currently amended) A high specimen yield anti-reflux head for a needle aspiration biopsy device, comprising: a sample passageway communicating specimens through an internal opening to a collection well where specimens are collected, the sample passageway being resistant to reflux under gravity of the collected specimens back into the sample passageway due to at least one of the configuration of the sample passageway and the location of the internal opening relative to a floor of the collection well, wherein the head extends along a long axis and wherein the sample passageway extends from a segment concentric with the long axis, around the collection well without passing through a floor of the collection well and to the internal opening spaced from the floor so that specimens can be deposited down into the collection well through the internal opening from above the floor.

48. (currently amended) A high specimen yield anti-reflux head for a needle aspiration biopsy device, comprising: a specimen collection well concentric about a long axis with a floor at its bottom, a needle opening concentric with the long axis for mounting a needle, and a sample passageway extending from the needle opening within the head around the collection well without passing through the collection well floor to an interior opening located other than at the floor of the collection well in spaced relation to the floor such that a specimen can pass from the needle opening through the sample passageway and be deposited in the collection well from above the floor with collected specimens being spaced from the internal opening.

49. (currently amended) A high specimen yield anti-reflux head for a needle aspiration biopsy device, comprising: a specimen collection well concentric with a long axis with a floor at its bottom, a needle opening concentric with the long axis for mounting a needle, and a sample passageway extending from the needle opening to an interior opening without passing through the collection well floor, the interior opening being in spaced relation to the collection well floor such that a specimen can pass through the sample passageway and be deposited in the collection well from above the floor, wherein the sample passageway is defined by a first segment extending from the internal opening at an angle to the long axis, a second segment extending continuously from the first segment, a portion of which is concentric about an axis spaced from the long axis, and a third segment extending continuously from the second segment to the needle opening.

50. (currently amended) A high specimen yielding anti-reflux needle aspiration biopsy device, comprising:

a syringe including a barrel and a piston slidable within the barrel, the syringe barrel extending along and concentric about a long axis;

a valve for controlling an opening in the syringe barrel;

a hub linked to the valve and defining a specimen collection well concentric with the long axis; and

a needle mounted to the hub having a shaft with an open pointed tip concentric with the long axis;

wherein at least one of the hub and needle define a sample passageway extending from the needle tip to an internal opening inside the hub, the internal opening being spaced from a floor of the collection well such that specimens can be deposited in the collection well from above the floor to resist reflux of the collected specimens back into the sample passageway, wherein the sample passageway is defined by a first segment extending from the internal opening at an angle to the long axis, a second segment extending continuously from the first segment, a portion of which is concentric about an axis spaced from the long axis, and a third

segment extending continuously from the second segment to be concentric with the long axis without passing through the collection well floor.

51. (currently amended) The device of claim 50, wherein the needle defines the entire sample passageway extending from the pointed tip to a contoured proximal end defining the first, second and third segments.

52. (previously presented) The device of claim 50, wherein the sample passageway is defined in part by the needle and in part by an internal passage in the hub.

53. (previously presented) The device of claim 50, further including a coupler containing the valve and connecting the hub to the syringe.

54. (previously presented) The device of claim 50, further including a piston lock mounted to the syringe so as to fix the piston relative to the barrel.

55. (currently amended) A method of needle aspiration biopsy using a device as recited in claim 50, comprising the steps of:

- creating a vacuum in the syringe;
- inserting the needle into a specimen sample site;
- communicating the vacuum to the needle;
- probing the specimen sample site with the needle;

~~to collect~~ collecting specimens in the a collection well of the hub by drawing specimens via the vacuum up through a shaft of the needle disposed along a long axis concentric with the syringe and through a sample passageway extending from a segment concentric the long axis, around the collection well without passing through a floor of the collection well and to an internal opening to the collection well spaced from the collection well floor so that specimens can be deposited down into the collection well through the internal opening from above the collection well floor;

releasing the vacuum in the needle;
withdrawing the needle from the specimen sample site;
separating the hub from the syringe; and
transferring specimens collected in the hub to an examination site.

56. (previously presented) The method of claim 55, wherein the step of creating a vacuum in the syringe includes closing the valve and pulling the syringe piston away from the syringe barrel.

57. (previously presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the vacuum is communicated to the needle by opening the valve.

58. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the step of releasing the vacuum in the needle includes reclosing the valve.--